

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, and 5-29 were previously pending in this application. Claims 30-36 have been added. Claims 1, 6, 7, 9, 11, and 19-21 have been amended. Claims 1-3, 5-36 are now pending for examination with claims 1, 19, 20, 28, and 30 being independent claims. Claims 27 and 28 were indicated to as allowed, and claims 2, 3, 12, 13, 21, 23-25 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Preliminary Matters

In the Specification

The Office Action alleges that the meaning of “locking mechanisms that reversibly lock together” is unclear. The Applicants clarify that that term “reversible locking together” means non-permanently locking together.

In the Claims

The Office Action objected to claim 1 because of a lack of antecedent basis for the phrase “the fluid controller.” Claim 1 has been amended to overcome this rejection. Please note that in line one of paragraph one of the Objections Section of the Office Action, claim 1 is objected to. Subsequently, in line two of the same paragraph, it is stated that claim 21 lacks antecedent basis. In this Response to the Office Action, the Applicant has assumed that the antecedent basis objection refers to claim 1 and that claim 21 does not lack antecedent basis.

Additionally, the Office Action objected to claims 11 and 20 because of a lack of clarity of the phrase “reversibly mate.” Without acceding to the propriety of the objection, the Applicant has amended the both claims 11 and 20 to omit the word “reversibly.”

Accordingly, withdrawal of the objections to claims 1, 11 and 20, is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Office Action rejected claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,332,760 to Chung (hereinafter Chung). Claim 19 has been amended to recite, in part, “a fluid controller including an electrically powered pump, the fluid controller being

fixedly connected to the inflatable bladder.” Support for fixed connection of the fluid controller to the bladder is provided at least at page 6, lines 6-8 of the application.

Chung is directed to an inflatable product including an inflatable body, a socket, an electric pump, and a battery case, wherein the electric pump is detachably connected to the socket in order to pump the inflatable body. (Chung in the Abstract.) The pump, in Chung, is fitted into the socket and actuated to pump outside air into an air bed as shown in figure 3A. (Col. 2, lines 7-9). Subsequently, during the deflating process, the user detaches the electric pump from the socket to deflate the air bed. (Column 2, lines 4-12.)

In a second embodiment, Chung discloses that an electric pump is fitted into the socket with an outlet located inside the air bed and an inlet located outside the air bed, and the pump is activated to inflate the airbed. (Column 2, lines 37-39.) After inflation, the air pump is detached from the socket and a cap is closed to seal the air bed and thereby prevent deflation. (Column 2, lines 48-52.) During subsequent deflation, the electric pump is reversely fitted into the socket and the pump is activated such that the air inside the air bed is pumped outside of the airbed. (Column 2, lines 53-61.)

Accordingly, in both the first embodiment and the second embodiment described by Chung, the fluid controller is not fixedly connected to the inflatable bladder (i.e., the pump is detachable). Because Chung does not disclose, *inter alia*, a fluid controller fixedly connected to an inflatable bladder, Chung does not anticipate Claim 19 as amended. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 19 is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 5-10, 14-18, and 29 are Patentable

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 5-10, 14-18, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,995,653 to Mackal et al. (hereinafter Mackal) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,903,941 to Shafer et al (hereinafter Shafer).

The Office Action asserts that Mackal discloses an inflatable device comprising a fluid impermeable bladder, a recess that accommodates a portion of the fluid control, and describes that a fluid controller may be connected to a source of pressurized air such as a pump. However, the Office Action states that Mackal does not provide details on the source of pressurized air.

The Office Action relies on Shafer to disclose an air bed with an air control system comprising an electrically powered pump.

Mackal is directed to an inflation device for inflating and deflating articles, and in particular to a combined closure and check valve device which is adapted for use with inflatable objects. (Column 1, lines 4-7.) While Mackal describes that the inflation device can be connected to a source pressurized air through an inflation tube, the source of pressurized air is located outside the bladder.

Similarly, Shafer discloses a base unit 44 having a pump. (Col. 6, lines 24-25.) The pump is connected to a bladder via tubes such that the pump is located outside of the bladder. Accordingly, neither Mackal nor Shafer disclose or suggest, *inter alia*, a fluid controller including a pump wherein that pump is at least partially positioned in the recess of a bladder, as recited in amended claim 1. Therefore claim 1 as amended distinguishes over the combination of Mackal in view of Shafer. The withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 5-10, 14-18 and 29 depend from claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reason.

Additionally, claim 11 depends from claim 1 and is patentable for at least the same reason as claim 1.

Claims 20, 22, and 26 are Patentable

The Office Action rejected claims 20, 22, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shafer in view of Japanese Patent No. JP-405137809-A to Nagashima (hereinafter Nagashima).

The Office Action alleges that Shafer discloses an air bed with an air control system, a fluid controller comprising an air pump and tubes connected to fittings for insertion into inlets of a substantially impermeable bladder of an air mattress. However, the Office Action acknowledges that Shafer fails to disclose that the adjustment device can be removably locked to a fluid controller. The Office Action then alleges that Nagashima discloses an adjustment device A which can be removably locked to a pump body B. The Office Action concludes that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide a means to removably lock the adjustment device of Shafer to the fluid controller of Shafer because it is common to provide a

removable means of attaching an adjustment device to a fluid controller, as taught by Nagashima.

Without acceding to the appropriateness of the asserted combination of reference, which is improper, claim 20 has been amended to further recite that the adjustment device includes a first switch mechanically connected to a valve through which fluid communication between the bladder and the pump occurs (as recited in previously allowable claim 21). Neither Shafer nor Nagashima disclose or suggest such a switch. Accordingly, claim 20 patently distinguishes over the asserted improper combination of Shafer and Nagashima, and the removal of the rejection of claim 20 is respectfully requested.

Claims 22 and 26 depend from claim 20 and therefore are patentable for at least the same reason.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, the Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50/2762.

Respectfully submitted,
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